2008 Innovations Awards Program
APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 08-W-13MT

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: ____Montana

Assign Program Category (applicant): ____ *Natural Resources* - Environmental Protection

1. **Program Name -** Montana Department of Environmental Quality TankHelper
2. **Administering Agency –** Montana Department of Environmental Quality
3. **Contact Person (Name and Title) –** Audrey Hinman
4. **Address –** 101 N Rodney Ste 2, Helena, MT 59601
5. **Telephone Number –** 406-444-1635
6. **FAX Number –** 406-444-2701
7. **E-mail Address –** ahinman@mt.gov
8. **Web site Address -** http://app.mt.gov/tank/
9. **Please provide a two-sentence description of the program. -** The Montana Department of Environmental Quality TankHelper service is an interactive training tool that translates complex petroleum storage tank rules into simple, easy-to-understand instructions and helps users develop a maintenance plan for their system. The service asks the user a series of questions about their facility's equipment and then creates a customized compliance action plan with specific instructions on how to stay in compliance with Montana laws.
10. **How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 1, 2008 to be considered. -** January 4, 2006.
11. **Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?** Prior to the online service, petroleum system operators were required to read through a lengthy manual to determine what information was pertinent to their site and what actions were required to remain compliant with Montana laws. The TankHelper service has simplified this process by translating these complex petroleum storage tank rules into simple, easy-to-understand instructions. In addition to learning the underground storage tank laws that apply to their facility, a site-specific management plan is created for future use.
12. **Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order. -** The Montana TankHelper service is easy-to-use and provides clear navigation and various help options to petroleum storage tank operators throughout the entire training process. First time users are presented with a brief description of the service and a list of the categories to be addressed during training, which include: required duties, action deadlines, record keeping requirements, best management practices and response actions.

To start their training, users are asked to provide facility information including a facility identification number. Using the information, the service is able to retrieve information associated with this facility from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's database. While completing their training session, the user can view this information at any time to assist with

answering questions. In addition, a username is created for the training session that enables the owner/operator to return to their training at any time. When the user logs in, the next applicable training section is displayed and the user is able to continue from where they left off. A progress bar is included on each page to display the percentage of training completed by the user.

Upon completion of the training, the user sees a comparison table that displays two columns; the first contains all answers provided by the user during their training session and the second contains the facility information on file with the state; all discrepancies are highlighted in yellow to make them easily identifiable to both the user and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality upon submission. The user has the opportunity to return to any section and make changes, if necessary, or they can proceed with submitting the information as is. Once the plan is submitted, a printable management plan is generated for their facility that outlines required duties and upcoming action deadlines that can be used to assist with future compliance issues.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method? – The TankHelper service is the first of its kind and currently there are no other programs similar to it in the nation. It represents a new and innovative way to help petroleum system operators understand and comply with lengthy and complicated regulations. By answering a series of questions, the tank owner or operator provides information about their site regarding leak detection, spill/overfill notification and corrosion protection that the service then uses to create a customized compliance/management plan complete with required duties and actions deadlines.

Various 'help' options are available to assist the owner/operator as they proceed through the training session. Photographs of various pieces of equipment are included to help the user identify the equipment specific to their facility and a glossary is available to define the applicable terms used on each page. All of these are included to help the owner/operator understand their equipment and to reduce the likelihood of problems with their facilities.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality can use the information provided during the training session to monitor action plans, update facility information within their database and/or contact the owner/operator, if necessary. The department is notified via email once a TankHelper training session has been completed, and they can use the facility identification number to view the action plan generated during the session. They have access to the comparison table generated by the service that compares the answers provided by the operator with the information on file in the state's database. All discrepancies are highlighted in yellow to make them easily identifiable to the department. This allows the Montana Department of Environmental Quality to not only provide a training opportunity for owners/operators of petroleum storage tank facilities but also to track the information provided by the users.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.) – The development of this service cost the Montana Department of Environmental Quality $45,000. The project was built in partnership with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Interactive, LLC and Ben Thomas & Associates.

The staffing needs associated with this service included 3 employees; 1 to oversee the content and complexities of underground storage tanks and 2 to oversee the implementation of the Montana TankHelper service (project management and development). Existing Montana Department of Environmental Quality staff members (2- 3) were in charge of the oversight of the entire project and project participants.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs? - This service was developed through a public/private alliance between the state of Montana and mt.gov. Maintenance and enhancements to the service will be provided without the use of tax dollars or a state general fund appropriation.

16. How is the program funded? - The funding for the TankHelper service was provided by a federal grant.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number. – No legislation was required for this service.

18.What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program? – The service is run on Production Database Server - 10.194.140.62 Headless Dell PE2950
Quad Core Xeon Processor X53552x4MB Cache, 2.66GHz, 1333MHz FSB (x 2)
8GB RAM
4 - 300GB SCSI drives - RAID5
SuSE Enterprise Server 10 Operating System
Oracle 10
Backup performed daily via Upstream
==========
Blade enclosure
Dell 1655MC PowerEdge blade enclosure
Headless
2 - Gigabit switches
2 - power supplies
==========
Blade 1 - app.mt.gov - 161.7.9.81
Dell 1655MC PowerEdge blade server
Headless
1.4GHZ Processor - Dual procs
2GB - RAM
2 - 146GB SCSI hard drives - mirrored
2 - gigabit NIC cards
SuSE Linux Standard Server 8
Kernel 2.4.21-281-smp
Backed up by Upstream
==========
Blade 2 - mtprodj1.mt.gov - 161.7.9.83 Dell 1655MC PowerEdge blade server Headless 1.4GHZ Processor - Dual procs 2GB – RAM
2 - 146GB SCSI hard drives - mirrored
2 - gigabit NIC cards
SuSE Linux Standard Server 8
Kernel 2.4.21-281-smp
Backed up by Upstream
==========
Blade 3 - mtprodj2.mt.gov - 161.7.9.85 Dell 1655MC PowerEdge blade server Headless 1.4GHZ Processor - Dual procs 2GB - RAM
2 - 146GB SCSI hard drives - mirrored
2 - gigabit NIC cards
SuSE Linux Standard Server 8
Kernel 2.4.21-281-smp
Backed up by Upstream
==========

Blade 4 - 161.7.9.87
Dell 1655MC PowerEdge blade server
Headless
1.4GHZ Processor - Dual procs
2GB - RAM
2 - 146GB SCSI hard drives - mirrored
2 - gigabit NIC cards
SuSE Linux Standard Server 8
Kernel 2.4.21-281-smp
Backed up by Upstream
==========
Blade 6 - 161.7.9.84
Dell 1655MC PowerEdge blade server
Headless
1.4GHZ Processor - Dual procs
2GB - RAM
2 - 146GB SCSI hard drives - mirrored
2 - gigabit NIC cards
SuSE Linux Standard Server 8
Kernel 2.4.21-281-smp
Backed up by Upstream
==========
APP5 - app5.mt.gov - 161.7.9.161 Dell 2550 PowerEdge server Headless
931 MHz Processor - Dual procs
4GB - RAM
50+GB SCSI disk space - RAID5
Ethernet Pro 100 NIC
Kernel 2.4.21-281-smp
Backed up by Upstream

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address. – Yes, this service originated in Montana and the innovator of the Montana TankHelper service is
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20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ? – This program is the first of its kind and there are no other programs similar to it in other states.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? – Yes, the service has been fully implemented.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

The Montana TankHelper service has alleviated the confusion surrounding underground storage tank compliance rules and regulations. It has reduced the dependency on complicated, department issued

manuals and has helped clarify what the owner/operator needs to do to stay in compliance with Montana state law.

For example, prior to the TankHelper service, owners/operators were required to read through lengthy paper manuals (50+ pages) to decipher what rules and regulations applied to their facility. The TankHelper service changed this and presents only the information applicable to their site in an easy-to-understand and user-friendly format.

In addition, owners/operator no longer have to search through the paper manual to determine required duties and action deadlines, instead TankHelper creates a customized management plan for the site which outlines the required duties to be performed and deadlines.

The Montana TankHelper service has made complex underground storage tanks and compliance information more familiar and understandable to the owners and operators.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception? – The program has remained the same from conception to launch.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program? – Other states could easily implement similar trainings. The information stored in the agency database serves as a double check for the customer and is not necessary for implementation of a training program such as TankHelper.